THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Chhattisgarh.

(b) No functional necessity has been felt.

(c) Nil.

(d) Does not arise.

Facilities to Ex-Servicemen

3592. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of ex-servicemen living in the country both in urban and rural areas separately;

(b) the facilities/concessions provided to them in addition to terminal benefits; and

(c) whether Government propose to launch health scheme and educational loan schemes specially for those ex-servicemen and their wards living in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI B.K.HANDIQUE): (a) The list of ex-servicemen in the country is maintained district wise (Zila Sainik Board)/State-wise and not urban/rural-wise. The total number of ex-servicemen in the country as on 31st December, 2004 is 19,06,693.

(b) In addition to the pensionary/terminal benefits admissible to the armed forces personnel and their families, the broad facilities/concessions being provided to ex-servicemen include educational concession, admission into professional colleges, preferential allotment of seats in NTs, reservation in Sainik and military schools, accommodation in war memorial hostels, rail travel concession, air travel concession, canteen store facilities, telephone concession facilities, transit facilities, army welfare corpuses etc. The State/Union Territories Governments are also having number of separate welfare schemes for ex-servicemen.

(c) The Government of India has already launched Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) w.e.f. 1.4.2003 to provide comprehensive medicare to ex-servicemen and their authorised dependents by setting up of 227 polyclinics throughout the country to be completed by 31stMarch 2008. There is no scheme for giving educational loan to ex-servicemen under consideration of the Government.